

New Mission News

COMFORTING THE AFFLICTED AND AFFLICTING THE COMFORTABLE SINCE 1980 • JANUARY 2000



Mayan Prophecy by Mario Joel. Photo by Gary Stenger.

Have a tumultuous new year!

By Victor Miller

The year 1999 began with a race for mayor that looked like it would have only one candidate. We were heading towards a coronation rather than a contest. Dissent remained the province of coffeehouse grumblers, career protestors and middle class policy wonks, the usual disaffected and ineffective political players who give San Francisco its colorful campaigns and occasional drama but not much else.

Soaring housing costs, a crumbling city infrastructure, the displacement of working and middle income people from the city, and the intractable plight of thousands of homeless did not even elicit a blip on the radar screens of those who proclaimed "*Dot com über alles.*" Multimedia needed living room and if somebody else was already living in it, too bad. The digerati, who created an Intranet community linking people all over the world felt a paradoxical need to live in close physical proximity to one another, and you know which neighborhood was at the top of their list.

The Ammiano write-in campaign seemed like a Hail Mary pass, something thrown up in the last seconds of the game, a gesture of pride, defiance and hope. When this almost inadvertent rebellion forced a December 14 showdown of populism and pomposity, the issues of economic justice and gentrification moved from stage left to stage center. The campaign crystallized an amorphous opposi-

tion and defined the arena of combat for the coming year and well beyond.

The day after the election both major dailies felt compelled to impress upon their readers that the 60/40 vote had been a LANDSLIDE! It was a curious kind of landslide. Brown had campaigned rigorously for over a year, tying up the endorsements of labor, the cops and even the San Francisco Republican Party. Brown raised more money, both hard and soft, than anyone thought either possible or necessary. At the last minute, Ammiano permitted his name to be entered on the ballot, raised a little cash here and there, and gave it his best shot for a month and half. Under these circumstances, for an incumbent mayor serving during the greatest peacetime economic boom in the city's history since the Gold Rush, to garner only 60% of the vote, is something of an embarrassment to the victorious party.

In the Mission the landslide went the other way - Ammiano 65%, Brown 35%. While the great wave of affluence crested in Soma, this is where it broke with all its fury. Retirees who have spent their lives here and expected to die with a modicum of peace and dignity are being evicted or are constantly under the threat of eviction. The option of home ownership now exceeds the means of all but a few. The gap between those comfortably well off and those living from paycheck to paycheck grows greater everyday.

But the Mission has a long tradition of activism, one that goes through extended

periods of quiescence, but is now back with a vengeance. This not a community that will stand by and watch hundreds of people callously thrown out of their homes, or one that will be strangled by chain stores or be turned into plutocracy's playpen. This is a community that will fight. The election was just the opening bell.

Before the Ammiano uprising, the prevailing attitude was that removal of the poor and the homogenization of the community was inevitable. "The rich always win" was the defeatist mantra of slacker cynics. But now despite the LANDSLIDE! ballyhoo, there is a sense of a "fighting chance." The army of volunteers that came out for Ammiano was the largest for any local candidate in recent memory. They did not dethrone the king but they very definitely made him sweat. That alone may be enough to keep the momentum going.

While the Brown forces constituted an organization driven by a candidate, Ammiano was a candidate driven by an organization. Given the intensity of the effort it is difficult to believe the energy that propelled the candidate will simply dissipate. The genie is out of the bottle and he's pissed off.

In at least one way, the Mayor's race was something in which San Franciscan's can take pride. While the national press practically drooled at the spectacle of an African American running against a gay man, neither race nor sexual preference played much of a role in the campaign. Both Brown and Ammiano did well in their respective "favorite son" areas of town (Brown in Hunters Point, Ammiano

in the Castro and Mission) but that was the extent of it. The election was issue driven, with concerns about social and economic justice in the forefront. (On the other hand the sideshow race for District Attorney turned into a contemptible display of ego-maniacal dung heaving.)

The issues of a living wage, affordable housing, diversified neighborhoods and homelessness were not resolved by the LANDSLIDE! They were re-energized by a contest the smart money said would never take place at all. The Mission in the first year of the new millennium will be one of the more important places where those struggles continue.

Our neighborhood has been home for the immigrant, the non-conformist and the outsider: rich, poor, black, white, yellow and brown. The coming year will be a decisive one in determining whether that diversity is subsumed in a wave of trendy hipness, mall oriented banality and greed. The problems of race and class and the associated social superstitions which have plagued the last century will not be resolved in the next one, if people are forced to live in geographic segregation from one another.

The Mission has been a model for how disparate cultures can exist in limited space in relative peace. It has been a dirty and noisy and sometimes violent place but its value as a most livable multicultural community remains undiminished. And it now appears that is something people will fight for. The year 2000 is shaping up to be a battle royal between the renewed forces of grassroots activism and the multimedia version of old fashioned avarice. It should be exciting.

Images of the Mission in the 20th Century

SEE
PAGE 8



Melanio Casas

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To the Egress

The eviction of Anna Jones

Changes in the Ellis Act, making the process of removing rental property from the market and evicting current tenants more lengthy, take effect on January 1. In the final months of 1999 a rash of eviction notices were issued by landlords wishing to avoid the new restrictions. One of the many people being forced out is 89 year old Anna Jones who has lived in the Mission for over 30 years. Interviewed at her small 18th Street apartment, she described her situation to the New Mission News.

I've lived in my apartment for 22 years. I got the eviction notice in October, I'm looking for a room now, board and care. She [the landlady] offered me a place in the Western Addition but at 89 you don't set up in a new apartment You just don't have the strength.

I looked at a board and care home in the Excelsior and it was terrible and it costs \$2000 a month I don't know how I can manage that.

They say I have to go. It's the law [Ellis] and I don't know what I can do about it. I've already started giving away my furniture. You know they don't have a

lot of room in those places [board and care homes]. It's just so hard. I always thought this where I would die. I wonder how she feels, [the owner] kicking out a 90 year old woman?

When I was young, I moved from Chicago to Los Angeles but I didn't like Los Angeles so I thought I would travel and visit all the cities in the country. But I came here to San Francisco in the 30's and decided this is where I wanted to stay.

I met my husband here and were married in 1962. At first we lived in the Sunset but he was the moving part of the couple and we moved several times the first few years we were married. One day he made up his mind to move to move to the Mission where it's sunny. We had a place at 23rd and Treat and both of us had custodial jobs at Hawthorne School [now Cesar Chavez] and it was very nice because we could walk to work. After he died in 1975 I stayed there for two years then I moved into this apartment.

I don't hear so well and my eyes aren't very good but I still enjoy TV sometimes. Mostly I like to crochet. There's a woman who comes in to help me with



Anna Jones is being forced out of her home of 22years. Photo by Gary Stenger

things but I cook my own meals. I was always a very independent person and I guess I still am. The people from my church people help me a bit and they come by to take me to services every Sunday. It's First Covenant on Dolores.

But I really don't get out so much anymore. One block to the market on the corner is long a walk when you're my age and I need my to use "Cadillac" - that's what I call my walker. They say the neighborhood is changing that young people with money are filling up the place. Young

people with money? I don't know any

A ceramic in the shape of an open book on the side table of Anna Jones living room bears the painted inscription "To a friend's house the journey is never long."

"To the Egress" is an ongoing series of first person accounts by Mission residents being evicted from their homes. If you have a story you would like to share contact us at 777 Valencia St. CA 94110 Phone 695-8702, fax 695-2838 or email vmiller@sirius.com.

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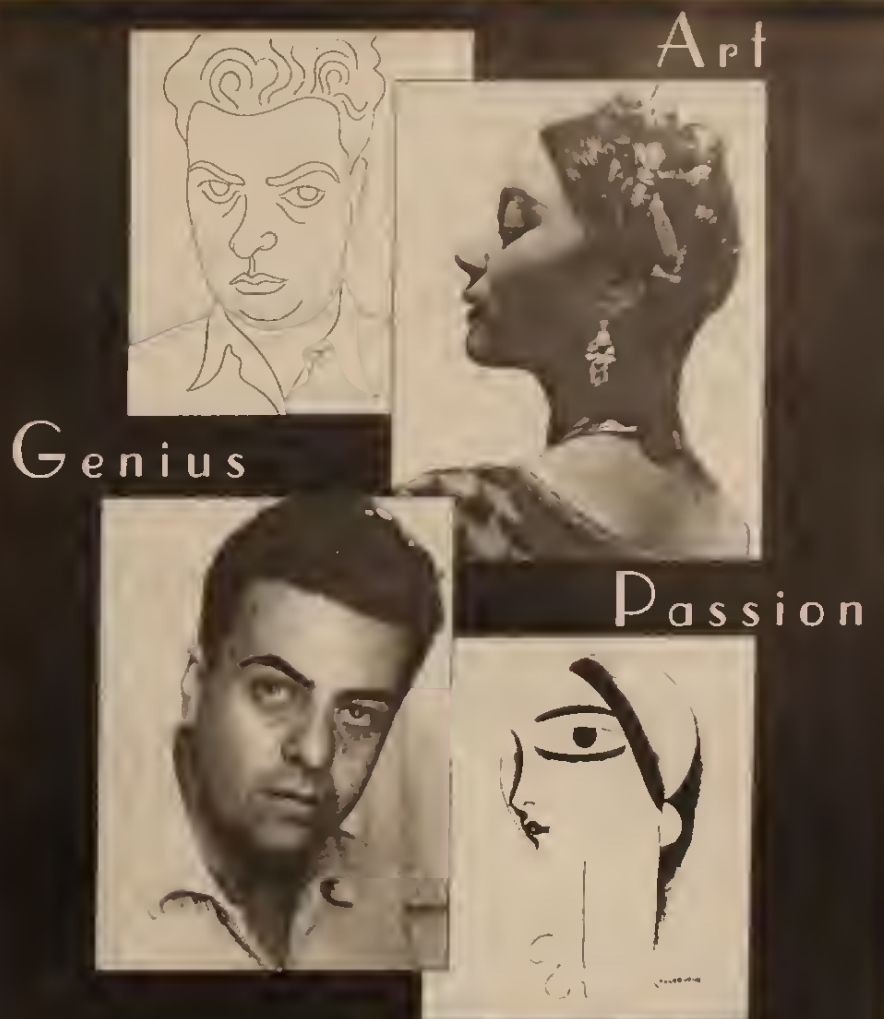
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Guest Opinion

Election Surprises

By Randy Shaw

Two unexpected factors led to Mayor Brown's decisive victory: the public's lack of interest in political corruption and labor's all-out campaign for the mayor.

Tom Amunio's best chance to win support from conservative and moderate voters on the West Side was to hammer on the various corruption scandals that plagued the Brown Administration in 1999. These include the selling of Section 8 certificates at the Housing Authority, fraud in minority contracting at the Human Rights Commission, and the illegal award of city funds to a for-profit company headed by longtime Brown ally Charles Walker.

Amunio needed the "good government" issue to sway voters whose ideology was closer to Brown's. But Amunio learned that West Side voters did not care about the scandals of the

Brown Administration because they felt such incidents were politics as usual. Amunio tried to ignite the ethics angle by accusing Brown of having his "hand in the cookie jar," but to no avail. Amunio was left without any issue that could prevent a Brown landslide on the West Side.

The other surprising development that bolstered Brown's victory margin was organized labor's all-out push for the mayor. Labor's endorsement of a mayor who had delivered to city employees and who had a thirty-year pro-union record

made perfect sense; no constituency can desert an incumbent who has performed strongly for them. But labor treated the runoff election as if Mayor Brown's opponent was a right-to-work, anti-union Republican, and donated big money and an army of campaign workers to the Brown campaign.

More importantly, labor declared Brown a hero to working people, undermining Amunio's depiction of the mayor as a tool of wealthy interests. By securing the strong support of such corporate leaders as GAP chair Donald Fisher, the Republican Party, the Committee on Jobs, and most of the city's unions, Brown could credibly argue that he was best able to work with diverse constituencies and confirmed his reputation as a political mastermind.

At the WTO meeting in Seattle, labor pressed a broad economic and environmental justice agenda that transcended its financial self-interest. Labor's willingness to declare all-out war on Tom Amunio's grassroots effort sent a less hopeful and even disturbing message.

Labor's endorsement of Brown made sense. But their all-out campaign to defeat a trusted ally did not. Brown's repeated attacks on Amunio as a "tax-and-spend liberal" willing to raise taxes to fund services resembled a script from the Chamber of Commerce, not the AFL-CIO.

Organized labor has consistently supported increased spending on human needs and, like Amunio, fought to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy rather than lay off government workers. Labor also has spearheaded struggles for a living wage. Unions thus subsidized a corporate-driven campaign message that brought Brown a victory and empowered forces opposed to labor's broader agenda. Corporate San Francisco had reason to fear Amunio; but the lingering question left to ponder from Amunio's candidacy is: What was organized labor so afraid of?

time to set the record straight as regards the demise of La Hacienda. First and foremost, the reason that La Hacienda failed was that its previous owner was deep in debt and had failed to pay his bills. At times, the SF Sheriff had even come in and cleared the cash register out to satisfy judgments against the owner. Many local businesses, both big and small, had been stiffed over the years and the owner had fallen behind in his rent as well.

Ti Couz had become the Master Lessee and Landlord of La Hacienda in a complicated deal in May 1998 that had in fact saved the market from failing at that time. Ti Couz paid a large amount of back rent for La Hacienda as well as lent its owner some operating capital because we were committed to keeping that space a market that served the community. The last thing we wanted was Starbucks in our community and we put our money where our mouth was and did everything in our power to help La Hacienda survive. In the end La Hacienda folded because of financial malfeasance and mismanagement, not because Ti Couz forced them out of business.

Since then, Ti Couz has worked long and hard and suffered some large financial losses while trying to put a new market in that space and we have finally succeeded. VAL 16 Market is now a reality. So please, tell your friends what really happened and continue to support the businesses that are part of your community, don't just talk against them when there is no basis in fact for doing so.

Roger LaRue Lotz, Sylvie Le Mer
Owners, Ti Couz

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Letters to the Editor

Editor,

Rumors, rumors, and more rumors followed by endless gossip and baseless speculation – that's what passes for information in the Mission these days when you're talking about the corner of 16th and Valencia Streets and the grocery market (formerly La Hacienda) that was on the corner. After hearing from lots of reliable sources that Starbucks was coming or the GAP was opening, or similar smoke of that kind – guess what?

The smoke has finally cleared and, Voila! What has happened? VAL 16 Market is what has appeared. A grocery store that specializes in produce, meat and Latino/ Mexicano groceries as well as a fine selection of drinks, snacks and all the usual items one finds in a good community oriented corner store. Many of the previous employees of the La Hacienda are back and want to encourage the community to shop there as they did in the past. The new owners are neighborhood people: the ex-manager of Truly Med and the owner of Randa's Market. They want and need your support in order to succeed, so stop in, and buy some goodies so that the community can have this space be the successful market that it needs.

But to dispel some vicious rumors that were circulating in the community, it's

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To all our great customers at Espresso Bravo Cafe

We are very happy to be able to serve you again after the tragedy of the King Hotel fire. We were fortunate and our cafe was spared and we are pleased to be back. In the new year we will be improving the business with your support. Soon Cafe Espresso Bravo will be a restaurant offering a lunch and dinner menu with wine and beer, along with our special breakfasts. We look forward to seeing you and thank you for your patronage in the next millennium.

Happy New Year and God bless you all. Cafe Espresso Bravo Staff



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Silicon Satan



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

I have decided to share with the *New Mission News'* readership my resolutions for this first New Year of the Third Millennium. As will be plain to see, I intend to do much more for the less fortunate. I have resolved to:

Help feed the poor. Not, of course, by wasting my money on charitable donations, but rather, by diversifying my portfolio with investments in companies that can rightfully claim to have fed more poor people than any self-serving non-profit: McDonalds, Burger King, and KFC.

Help the homeless find affordable

housing. Now I would be the first to admit that I haven't the faintest idea where the homeless can find affordable housing. But one thing is for certain: they're not going to find it in San Francisco. So I shall be encouraging them to stop wasting their efforts here and start looking for it somewhere else. To help them on their way, I have resolved to be more vigilant against nuisance crimes, and to support courageous community leaders like the Reverend Amos Brown, who is striving to ensure that San Francisco sheds its reputation as a soft touch for these median-straddling, shopping-cart-thieving, soda-can-hoarding scumbags.

Reverend Brown, a true champion of civil rights, understands that civil rights are a privilege. The homeless will be worthy of this privilege only when we have corrected their lazy, regressive and antisocial behavior - the garbage eating, the public urination and the constant begging for quarters - which has deservedly put them beyond the pale of humanity.

Help our local artists. Real artists move to New York and LA, not San Francisco. Yet, perhaps because of the popularity of recreational drugs in this city, an unusually large number of San Franciscans fancy themselves creatively gifted. Inevitably, a whole sordid industry of publicly-funded arts organizations has sprung up to cash in on their delusions: places like ATA, whose financial self-perpetuation depends on promulgating the bizarre notion that any cretin with a camcorder has the right to have his work shown on TV.

But by far the worst of these art-splottation scams has to be the annual Open Studios festival. What could be sadder than the spectacle of hundreds of

wannabe-artists paying to take part in an event that merely serves to emphasize the fact that their art is not good enough to be shown in a real gallery? No doubt they see it as their big chance to submit their work to the judgment of the public - but of course the only thing the public is interested in judging is the quality of their cheese and wine.

So I have resolved to help free our local artists from the yoke of their creative aspirations and ensure that the Mission, at least, can never again become a breeding ground for such self-deception. Not only will I make a point of visiting all the local open studios next summer, dispensing choice words of discouragement as I feast on the free snacks, but I will also be inviting a few developer friends to accompany me. For many of these studios are located in buildings which could, with a little imagination and hard work - and a few timely evictions - be transformed into exciting new office complexes for the true bearers of the creative torch: the hip new Web design houses and visionary e-commerce startups which will soon be making the Mission their home.

Confidential to L.W.:

Thank you for your kind offer, which I must once again decline. Not so much because of misguided loyalty to my old fraternity brother K.K. (N.M.) Ihan because j'ai peur qu'il pourrait prendre sa revanche sur mon vrai chéri: mon nouveau véhicule d'utilité de sport.

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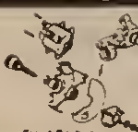
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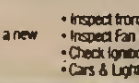
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Are you ready for the big one?

By Laura Brainin-Rodriguez

Much of the Mission is located over a lagoon, fed by a number of underground creeks. This means we are geologically unstable and likely to experience heavy damage in case of earthquakes. We also have a high density of businesses, which could release toxic or flammable materials into the environment. We have a diverse population, speaking a number of different languages. We need to insure we have the capacity to do the most good for the most people.

NERT stands for Neighborhood Emergency Response Team. It is a training program developed by the San Francisco Fire Department to show people who work and/or live in San Francisco how to deal with major disasters.

NERT was developed in response to the concerned citizens of the Marina district who, after the 1989 earthquake, discovered they possessed little knowledge of the skills needed to assist during major disasters. This is very important, because in the event of a major disaster, fire and police resources will be strained to the maximum and it could take up to 3 days to

get help for people who are trapped or injured.

To date NERT has trained nearly 10,000 individuals in San Francisco. Classes have been offered in most neighborhoods. NERT teaches their volunteers to do light search and rescue, victim carries, medical triage, extinguish small fires, and do utility shutoffs for water, electricity and gas. They also encourage trainees to prepare their buildings, families, and workplaces for disasters.

The Mission NERT team has been active for 8 years and wants to encourage more Mission residents to be trained by the SFFD and to become involved in our neighborhood disaster preparedness activities. We meet every other month for one and one-half hours. We always do some skills refreshers as well as discuss how to increase our level of preparedness. In recent meetings we have reviewed high rise safety, victim carries, exiting through darkened stairwells, medical triage and basic first aid. We also organize and participate in one neighborhood drill per year, held in April and one citywide drill in October.



Mission NERT at the annual disaster drill in 1999. Photo by Christmas

During 1999 we offered two classes in the Mission district, including one in Spanish. We plan to offer at least two classes during 2000, including one in Spanish. The complete NERT training takes about 18 hours and is usually held on three consecutive Saturdays or on six weekday evenings in local schools or other community settings. We will inform the public of upcoming classes through the *New Mission News*, the *Cole Street Hardware Newsletter*, the *Liberty Hill Times*, *Rainbow Grocery* and other neighborhood businesses and organizations.

You can receive the NERT training in any neighborhood and join our team at our regular bimonthly meetings. If you want to take a NERT class, call NERT at 558-

3456, to sign up. If you have already trained with NERT and want to become more active with the Mission NERT team, call Laura at 554-9645. Feel free to also contact me if you are interested in sponsoring NERT classes in the Mission. This means you are able to bring together at least 20 people for the NERT training. The Mission NERT team will help you recruit the other 15 to 20 people we need to be able to offer a class in our neighborhood.

Lourea Brainin-Rodriguez has been the coordinator of the Mission NERT team for almost two years. She is a long-time Mission resident and feels fortunate to have such a great group of NERT graduates on her team.

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Day laborers: survival and conflict along Cesar Chavez Boulevard

By Leena S. Pendharkar

It's the September community relations meeting of the Mission District Police Station and an angry voice at the back of the room shouts, "We don't need day laborers sitting in residential areas and shitting and pissing on our street!" Captain Greg Suhr, who has been patiently listening to each person's complaint during the meeting - whether its about lighting or prostitution - and knows almost everyone in the room by their first name, calmly tells the owner of the voice that she is out of line.

Suhr goes on to tell her that everyone has a right to be there and that she shouldn't stereotype people. The woman is angry and continues to tell the meeting attendees that she is a third generation Mexican and that the day laborers are giving Mexican people a bad name. Eventually, she leaves the room, and so do the two men representing the day laborers.

Outside the meeting room, the two separate groups gather in opposite corners of the police station lobby. German Martinez and Eduardo Parlon of the Day Labor Program say that the workers are

victims of racism and NIMBYism and that they are just doing their part to survive. The others say that they are tired of these men lingering on their street corners drinking, swearing, harassing women, and carrying on with their buddies.

Between these groups of angry people are Captain Kevin Cashman and Officer Steve Thoma, patiently standing their watch, and answering questions. Both Officers attempt to calm each group down by just listening, or taking notes promising to follow up on individual's concerns. All in all, the Officers are patient and seem genuinely interested in helping settle the dispute.

Cultural clash

Tensions between Mission District residents and day laborers have grown into battles about race, class, economics, culture, status and other factors. In disputes where the stakes seem so high, the cops play the middlemen, trying to make sure that everyone can live happily and peacefully together.

Day laborer is the traditional term given to those who gather at prearranged locations and compete for jobs on a daily or per project basis. In the Mission that



Eduardo "Palomo" Parlon of the Day Labor Program passes out fliers for an evening meal and free health clinic. Photo by Margaret Yamasaki

location has historically been along Cesar Chavez, West of Bryant and East of Valencia Street. Most jobs involve manual labor such as painting, lifting, landscaping, or other construction-related jobs. Workers are compensated with cash at the end of the workday. Many of them are young Latinos from Mexico and Central and South America, who have illegally crossed the border into the United States for economic opportunities. "I am just here to work, to survive," said Robin, a young Mexican man who waits on Cesar Chavez each morning.

This is a situation that can be extremely difficult at times for many of these men, who face an array of problems. Besides unemployment or underemployment, they may also be dealing with economic exploitation, homelessness, poverty, or loneliness. Some turn to alcohol or drugs for comfort, some to criminal activity for survival. In order to organize the day laborers as a group and deal with some of the problems they face such as not being paid by certain employers, depression, or just helping them to find steady work, San Francisco started the Day Labor program in 1991.

The program, with an executive director, small offices located at Franklin Square Park and a paid staff, helps those who need workers and people who need work connect with each other. Executive Director German Martinez said that it is not an employment agency, but merely a liaison between people. The organization leaves it up to the employers to ask workers for documentation if they desire.

Although all day laborers have the option of using the program, many would rather stand on Cesar Chavez and wait on their own for a number of reasons. "I have to put my name in a book and I never get called, and sometimes there is a favoritism towards certain people there," claimed Robin. So that leaves people standing around on the streets.

MPC 25

The neighborhood around Cesar Chavez is low to middle income and mostly Latino. A number of the homes display signs with the Section 25 of the Municipal Police Code, which means, "no loitering in front of this location." Residents say that they are simply tired of the noise, drinking, and urinating. One woman who did not wish to be identified said that as she and her daughter were walking down the street, the men made ugly passes at them and used inappropriate language. "My daughter is scared and wonders what is going on," she said.

Residents put up the window signs so that if day laborers linger in front of their homes, the cops can tell them to move along or be arrested. But the deeper problem is that residents just do not want the day laborers there at all. "We pay taxes for

services and on our homes. We have rights, the day labors do not - they should move," said the same woman. Residents of the area would like laborers to use the Day Labor Program so that the men are off the streets and organized into a group.

City of refuge

Even though many of the day laborers are clearly in the country illegally, they are not deported by the police as in other cities because the San Francisco Board of Supervisors adopted a "city of refuge" or "sanctuary city" policy in 1985. This means that the police cannot arrest illegal immigrants unless they are breaking other laws. Also, the police do not cooperate with the INS to actively deport people.

Officer Guillermo Amigo, who regularly patrols the area, says that he respects the laborers and tries to be fair in dealing with them. He knows many of the laborers by name, and takes pride in the fact that they respect what he has to say. "I sympathize with these people - I am here to help," he said.

One visible problem in the area is that sometimes people involved in illicit activities linger around in the areas where the day laborers stand, causing trouble for the police and for people who are just looking for work. The police recognize the difference between the day laborers and others that might be dealing drugs or engaged in other crimes. They try to focus more on the lawbreakers. In this respect at least, the day laborers and police have a mutually beneficial relationship.

Martinez regularly attends community police meetings and knows some of the officers by name. He said that the cooperation between the police and day laborers has been helpful in showing the community and police officers that day laborers are just people trying to survive, like everyone else.

Although he says that some of the officers have been less than polite to the laborers, he still agrees that the interaction is beneficial. "There are a lot of police officers that are good friends of ours," he said.

In an effort to balance the complaints of Mission residents with the workers' right to free assembly, the officers will warn day laborers who linger in front of 25 MPC signs at least twice before they are taken in and arrested. If the police receive other complaints that involve drugs, fighting, or alcohol, laborers can be arrested depending upon the severity of the case.

"I don't have anything against the day laborers. If they are drinking, urinating or loitering, though, we have to let them know that they cannot do that," said Officer Amigo.

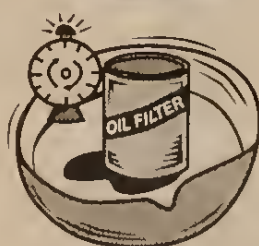
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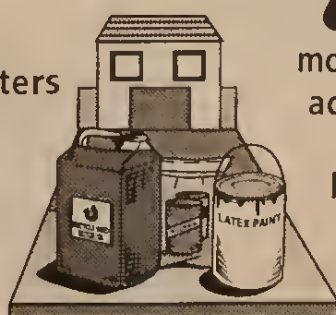
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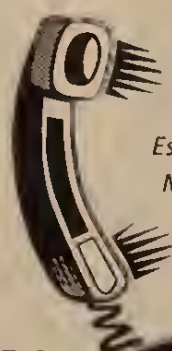


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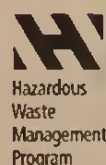


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Shades of the Mission: images of a community during the 20th Century

The photographs on this page and the following three pages constitute a collective photo essay of the Mission District during the 20th Century. These images from the family albums of past and present residents of the neighborhood were donated to the Mission Branch Library's Shades of the Mission Project

Over one hundred people responded to the call to "Help Us Save History." At the Mission Branch Library on Sunday March 7, teams of trained volunteers collected photographs recording the last one hundred and twenty years of history in the

Mission from donors whose families had come from all over the world. Volunteers interviewed and selected photos from the donors' personal photo collections. Two photographers then copied their photographs using high-resolution copy cameras, for the Mission Branch Library and for the San Francisco History Center.

For the umbrella project, the Shades of San Francisco, the San Francisco History Center has already documented the Western Addition neighborhood and will go on to document other San Francisco neighborhoods. We thank all the

wonderful donors who made this project possible. We invite you to come see the Shades of the Mission Photo Archive at the Mission Branch, and to have a great time learning more about our great community, the Mission District.

For more on Mission history see "The Mission's Phantom Railroad" on page 14, "A family in Mission History" on

page 16 and Library Lady's Column on neighborhood research on Page 20.

Do you have a favorite story from local history or a family story you like to see in print? Contact the New Mission News at 777 Valencia Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110 or call 695-8702.



Upper left: Irish family picnic in Dolores Park.

Upper right: 1906 earthquake tent park at 16th and Bryant. Mary Gretchen Davis and her children from three spouses. Children left to right are: Marie Fox, Jeanette Miller, John Fox (seated) and Katherine Davis on Mary Gretchen's lap. Tent was set up across the street from the boarding house operated by Mary Gretchen Davis. The earthquake and subsequent fire destroyed an enormous portion of the North Mission. All the fire plugs north of 20th Street failed to operate. The one at 20th and Dolores did and the fire was stopped. Every year since on April 18, the plug is painted gold in a ceremony commemorating the event.

Left: April 18th, 1914. Party after a bare-knuckle boxing match at Mitchell's Barn. Judge declared that the man who was knocked out was the winner. The identity of the pugilists and the exact location of Mitchell's Barn are unknown.



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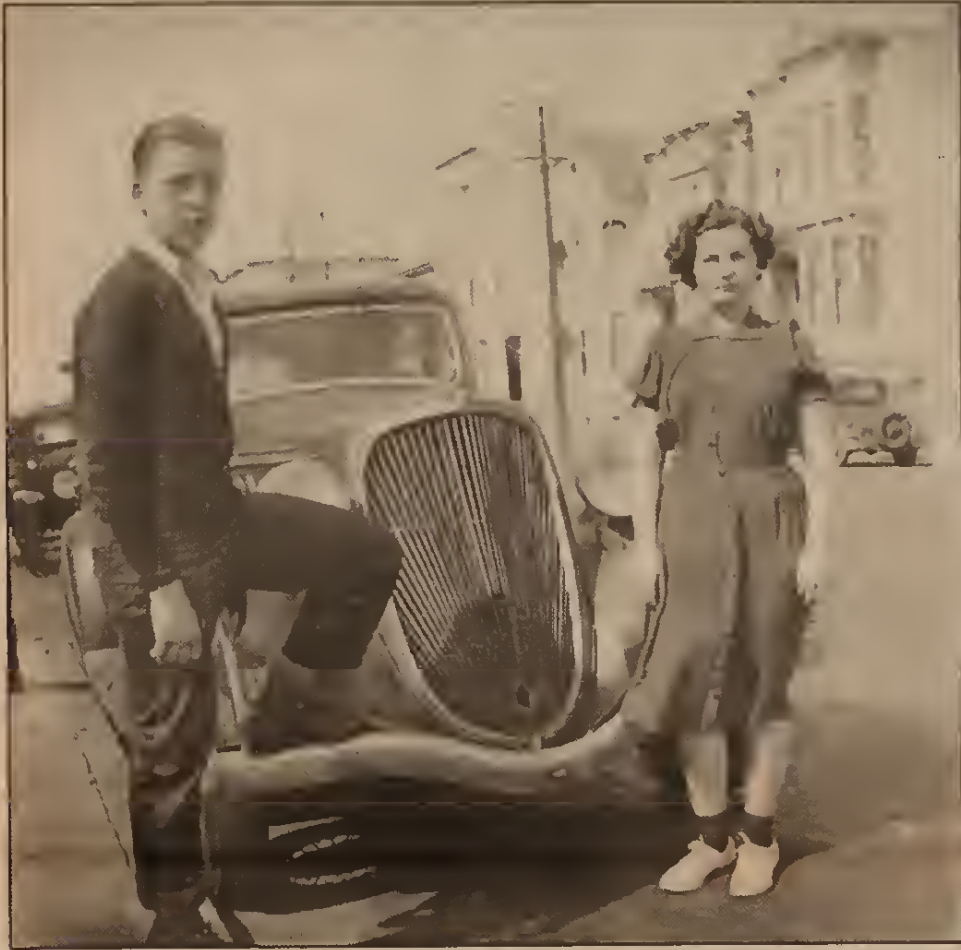
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Upper Left: Greek Orthodox picnic, 1929. The Pantages, Pantalakis and Scourkes families on an outing from San Francisco into the hills (San Bruno Mountain). Everyone rode in the truck.

Above: Sisters Stella, Emma and Lupe Weber with unnamed servicemen, one of whom holds little Catherine Weber, in Garfield Park, circa 1946.

Left: Georgette and Edmond Bordenave in 1937 with "Car Terreplane," their father's car.



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Far Left: 1957, Trophy Ball of Sacred Heart School. From left to right: Pete Duran, Dorinda Moreno, unknown, Dorinda's brother George.

Left: 1966, Yolanda Lopez and Michael Franco at the Greyhound bus station. Mike came to San Francisco because of the gay-friendly atmosphere. He is Yolanda's uncle, like a father.

Opposite Page, Upper Left: Farmworkers' Union rally in 1978 at St. Peter's Church Auditorium. Cesar Chavez is in the middle of the photo, and this is possibly the only time he ever spoke in the Mission.

Opposite Page, Upper Right: Mike Rios and Sal Garcia, 1985, in front of Galleria de la Raza, "The Woman by Woman Show."

Opposite Page, Below: Anti-gentrification rally, Mission Street, February 27th, 1999.




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J. S. Mala in the Mission



Community Alert!

In the March 7, 2000 presidential primaries, a new Juvenile Crime Initiative will go before the California voters that will give law enforcement and juvenile courts more authority and power over youth.

The Juvenile Crime Initiative, formally known as Proposition 21, calls for major changes in the way the state deals with youth. This includes trying minors as young as 14 as adults and making them eligible for the death penalty. Prop. 21, if passed by voters, would also mean longer prison sentences for minor offenses, removing the option of probation, and expanding three strikes provisions. Perhaps the most disturbing change that

the Juvenile Crime Initiative would establish is giving the decision to try a minor in adult court to the prosecutor rather than the judge.

Governor Gray Davis, backed by nearly every major law enforcement agency in the state, is a major supporter of the Pete Wilson drafted initiative. With a strong lobbying effort from law enforcement, a major transfer of funds will go into their annual budget. According to the Initiative's summary of chief purpose and points, "the measure would result in an unknown major net costs to the state of at least hundreds of millions of dollars annually and one time costs of at least several hundreds of millions of dollars." It goes on to say that there will be "unknown net costs to local governments of at least tens of millions of dollars annually, and tens of millions to hundreds of millions of dollars in one time costs."

This great expenditure of taxpayer money comes at a time when violent crime has significantly dropped, and social service and educational programs are suffering major financial cutbacks. Currently, in the state of California, the starting salary for a first year college professor is an average \$41,000 a year, compared to prison guard who makes \$51,000 a year.

The problem, other than being a burden on the taxpayers, is that the initiative gives the term "gang" a loose definition. Youths of color, who are already targets of police harassment, will be disproportionately affected.

Poel El "Duke" writes:

Juvenile Crime Initiative,

I'm sittin' back thinking, at 14 being tried as adults

but still ineligible for the vote!

Kicking it en la Misión,

radio blastn' KPOO rhythms, carne asada on the grill,

little kids play in the park.

Night falls, three homies take a stroll down Mission,

Turning left for the alley they hear tires

screechn'.

black and white rolls up, cuts the corner with the motor revn'.

spotlight directed in their youngsters' eyes.

Blue and red lights reflectn' off brown skin

doors fly open, PD stepn' out, shiny badge on black hat,

right finger on the trigger and the left one in my face,

it's either the bullet or the mace.

"Put your hands behind your back, step to the front,

palms flat, spread the feet," in a flash of confusion

I'm straight deprived of my constitutional

right to speak and exist like I'm free!

I got my hands locked down,

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I'm thinking it's a police state, face to the ground,

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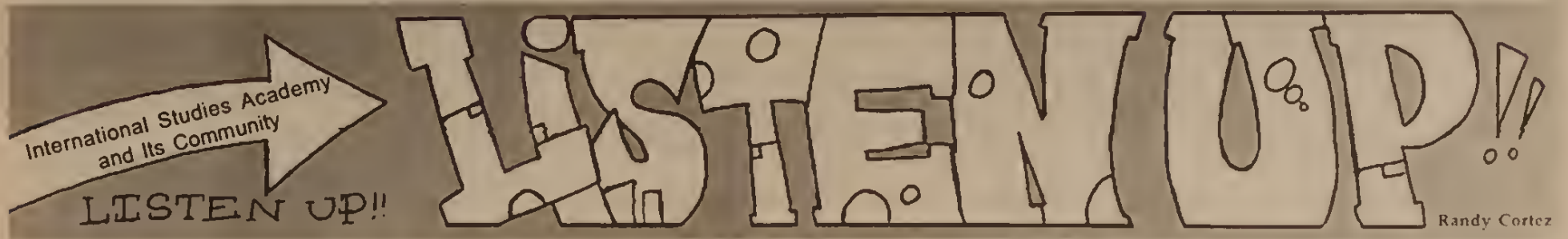
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ISA Students Keep it Clean

Suparin Nanthasiri
ISA Student

On Saturday, October 16, ISA had a school clean up day. Several students and some of the school staff showed up to help. In addition, some of the neighbors and some of the parents of the students joined in our effort. We cleaned up a lot of rooms in the school. I cleaned the Gym and organized some of the stuff in the building.

During lunch we barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs. They were delicious! It was inspiring to see everybody helping each other and working together. I think this was a good event that we should have in our school because it helps to bring out our school spirit and it also keeps our school clean. It was fun!

That day, we were more than teachers or students. It was as if we were all a big family. It doesn't just take one person like the janitor to keep the school clean. It takes the whole school community to make ISA a better place.

A Little Closer to Understanding Others

Listen Up! Staff

As part of their work investigating the meaning of leadership and community, the staff of *Listen Up!* have reflected on their own personal experience. These stories are about exchanges they have had with strangers that pleasantly surprised them. Here are some of excerpts.

"One time, I was playing basketball with my friends who were mostly African American. This White kid was ready to play with us and we were all thinking, "Oh he's weak." We thought just because he was White, he should be playing soccer, tennis or hockey. But once he stepped onto the court he surprised everybody—he was unstoppable! He never missed one jump shot. After the game was over everybody wanted to be his friend. I learned you shouldn't stereotype another person just because they're a different race. He really embarrassed all of us."

-Marshaun Williams

"In my English class we always get into groups. During our conversations, I learn about the different cultures of the people in my group. For example, one student is from Spain and she told me that in her country people like to watch bull-fighting. After that, I tried to learn more about bull-fighting through TV and in books. I am very interested in learning more about this different culture."

-Yan Wen Guo

"I remember when my little brother was in the hospital. In his room was this kid around 12 years old, who lost his arm in an accident. He introduced himself to us. Five days passed and little by little I started interacting with him. I helped him to the bathroom and helped him get dressed. I began to realize that it was really hard being disabled because you have to ask people to help you and sometimes some people may not want to."

-Karla Kattengell

"Moving to a new math class was tough. It was hard to interact with people I didn't know and people who were older than me. I didn't really talk to anyone in the class for the first two days. Eventually, I stated to communicate with the girl next to me. I started asking her if I could borrow her materials. After I started getting help from her and talking to her we became good friends. Now we always communicate and interact with each other. From my experience, I've learned something valuable. You can't judge a person by their image or outside, instead look at what is inside."

-Cynthia Lim

Let's Keep Our Community Clean!



Graphic: Moses Tapia

Fall Issue of *Listen Up!* is a Slammin' Success!



Members of the *Listen Up!* staff putting it down for the home team by distributing our first slammin' paper of the new semester!

(Pictured from left to right: Peter Jiunti, Chris Smith, Grisel Sanchez, Sanjai Jagdish and Senad Joldic)

Community Member Responds to *Listen Up!* Article

Dear Ho Yan Wong,

November 7, 1999

I want to thank you very much for your excellent editorial "A Reaction to Neighbor Complaints" in *Listen Up!*, volume 3, number 1. This is the first time that I have seen the ISA newspaper and I enjoyed reading it very much. Your editorial addressed the issue of neighbor complaints, and you make some very good points. I, too, am interested in this issue since at times I have been upset about things I have experienced or seen in the neighborhood. I have lived in Potrero Hill since 1978 and this neighborhood is home to me. Even though I am not actively involved in ISA, I try to be a good neighbor by supporting your car washes, and by donating books to your school.

Students have been sitting on my front stoop for years. I am happy to provide a place for the students to sit. No student has ever asked permission to sit on my stoop, but I don't think that is necessary. I grew up in a very small town and we ran through everyone's backyards all the time. We thought everyone's backyards belonged to us, and our neighbors were kind enough to let us think that was so. It's only fair that I extend the same courtesy to the students at ISA.

You mentioned in your article that sometimes students leave their trash on the neighbor's property. That has happened to me too, but it's not something that I would complain about, though it is something that I wish the students would think about. When I come home from work, I have enough to do picking up my own trash, without having to pick up trash for people I don't even know.

Your suggestion encouraging students to say hello to the neighbors is a great idea. It would be a nice gesture if both the students and the neighbors would start talking to each other more. I have noticed that since complaints about the school were made that no students ever sits on my stoop anymore. I miss that. Being able to provide a stoop for the students to sit on made me feel like I was helping them find a quiet, private place to enjoy before going back to school.

I think that your suggestions are going to help students understand their responsibility to their community, and hopefully it will help the neighbors understand that the students sometimes just need a place to sit. I also hope it will help the people who live in the community to understand that there is no place for rudeness—ever.

I once wrote an editorial for my high school newspaper that made some people very angry. But, it helped us to start to talk about a difficult issue. I hope that your editorial does the same. Keep up the good work, and know that you are welcome on my stoop any day!

Sincerely,

Marion Gillen

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Annie Chan, Tuan Chau, William Cho,
Irene Cook, Cindy Estrada, Cedric
Geter, Claudia Gonzalez, Yan Wen
Guo, Pei Xuan Huang, San Jai Jagdish,
Senoris Jinks, Peter Jiunti, Keith
Johnson, Senad Joldic, Karla Kattengell,
Man Fan Connie Lau, Kenny Lei,
Cynthia Lim, Edwin Mejia, Suparin
Nanthasiri, Leo Puni, Serena Ramirez,
Veronica Ramos, Shirelle Roberson,
Grisel Sanchez, Kseniya Shabelskaya,
Chris Smith, Cindy Yasmin Solano,
Moses Tapia, Kim White, Artiese Wil-
liams, Marshaun Williams, Ho Yan
Wong

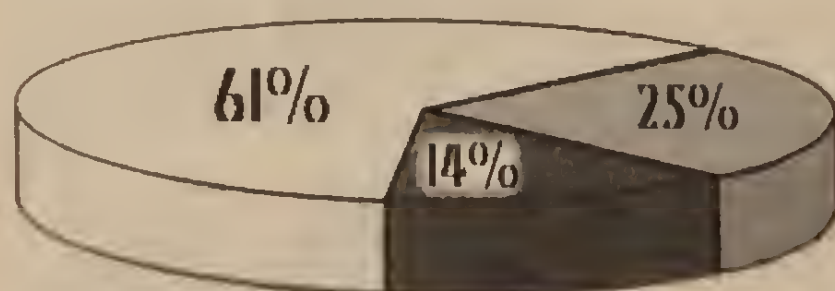
Getting Off to a Healthy Start

Carlos Gomez
ISA Teacher

How do you think ISA students can do better in school? Learn more? Have more fun? Be more challenged? Contribute more to the school community? We would like to include your ideas in a proposal that will help to make this school community a better place for everyone. ISA students, teachers, parents, families, administrators and community organizations are working on a plan that will bring \$450,000 (almost half a million dollars) to our school. The purpose of the grant

is to bring all of our talents and resources together to improve ISA.

The *Listen Up!* staff with the help of Ms. Lew's home room surveyed over 300 students at ISA on what areas they think would improve the school and their high school experience. 61% voted for more activities, 25% voted for health services and 14% voted for tutoring. What do you think?! Contact Mr. Gomez with your ideas!



Graph by: Peter Jiunti/SanJai Jagdish

□ Activities

□ Counseling
& Health
Services

■ Tutoring

10 Ways to Boost Your Grades

Grisel Sanchez and Cynthia Lim
ISA Students

Today, teens have been having trouble getting their grades up. Some might know why they are failing, some don't. Some might wonder "Why am I failing?" or "Why am I getting this grade, when I did all my work?" or "What can I do to get a better grade?" Well, there are answers to these questions. As a matter of fact there are several answers to these questions. If you follow these easy steps, then you will have no problem keeping a good grade or improving your grade.

- 1 Take notes on each section you read
- 2 A week before your exam, split the section and read a little bit each day to avoid cramming
- 3 Follow directions carefully
- 4 Do homework and class work
- 5 Ask questions
- 6 Participate in discussions
- 7 Show up to class everyday or get missed assignments
- 8 Have study groups before exam
- 9 Have a good night sleep before the exam
- 10 Eat a good and healthy breakfast the morning of your exam



Editorial and policy decisions are made by the staff. The staff consists of students in ISA's Ethnic Experience in Literature class.

Listen Up! name created by Yousanie Yarnway, former ISA student.

Listen Up! masthead design by Randy Cortez, former ISA student.

Name, masthead, and theme chosen democratically by the student staff.

20,000 copies published four times each year by Our Schools, Our Media (a non-profit organization that inspires and teaches students to mobilize community action on behalf of their schools).

The views expressed in *Listen Up!* are not necessarily those of Our Schools, Our Media nor all members of ISA. Ms. Lew and Ms. Guerrero are advisors to the *Listen Up!* project.

Thank you to the *New Mission News* for support of this publication.

Listen Up! is printed at Howard Quinn, a union shop.



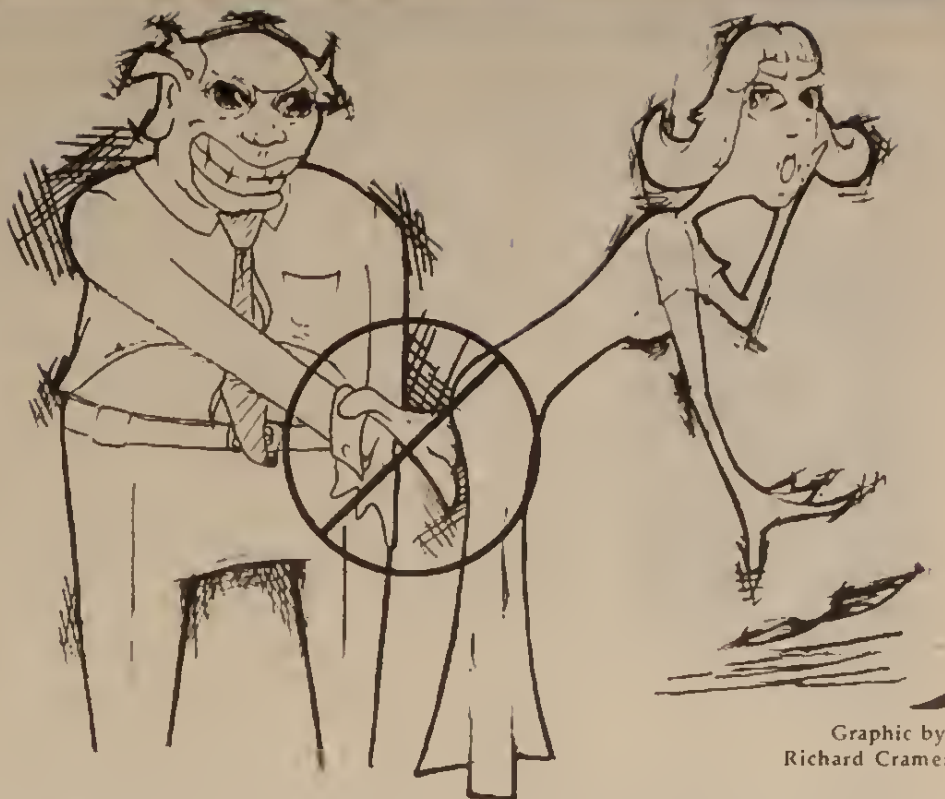
Hands Off!

Ksenia Shabelskaya
ISA Student

One of the most important problems of our time is sexual harassment. The definition of sexual harassment includes unwanted attention such as visual, verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. I did a couple of interviews and it shocked me that people feel that there is nothing they can do. I think it's because they are intimidated, or they have been threatened or lied to. They also may not know their rights.

- ✎ Sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual comments, touching and kissing.
- ✎ This crime of violence is one that primarily impacts girls and young women.
- ✎ Girls and young women under 25 are more likely to be sexually assaulted than women older than 25
- ✎ In the United States, a woman is raped every 1.3 minutes.

One of the things that everybody should know is that harassment is serious—and illegal. If sexual harassment happens at school it is very important for students to speak to a trusted adult. If the "harasser" is an adult or teacher, it can be very scary to point the finger at that particular person who may have control over a student's grade or who may be the one to write a letter recommendation to college, for a job, or for a scholarship. That adult may be a popular person in the community, someone who brings pride and attention to the school. None of these reasons are



Graphic by:
Richard Cramer

good enough for a student to endure sexual attention or contact from an adult.

You should never let anybody harass you, but if it does happen here is some advice: react and don't ignore it! Sexual harassment rarely disappears on its own. Seek help and support with a school counselor or trusted adult. Say no. Be firm and clear. Let the offender know that the harassment is unwelcome and unacceptable.

Students Attend ACLU Conference

Valerie Bruce and Arlen Olivas
ISA Students

On October 26, 1999 there was an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) youth rights conference in Berkeley. Many high schools and youth around the Bay Area were present, including some students from ISA.

We attended two workshops that interested us. One of them was called "Gay Rights on Campus". In a little room as we sat on the floor, a group of speakers told us about the problems of homophobia and how to start a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) Club in our schools. A new bill was signed by Governor Davis that will protect lesbian/gay, and bisexual students from discrimination. We learned that every student has a right to go to school and not be harassed on a daily basis about their sexual orientation. We were surprised to learn how much homophobia exists in our schools and communities today.

The second workshop we attended was called "Know Your Rights With The Police". *Do you know what to do when confronted by the police?* Jasmin Smith, a woman that fights against police brutality, gave us some tips on how to protect ourselves from police harassment. A skit was played out for us to show the youth what happens in a confusing situation. In this skit a young man wearing blue was walking down the street. A policeman stopped him because of the color he was wearing. The young person was confused as to what he did wrong. Then the police

man started attacking him with personal questions. The youth did not know his rights. A youth's rights are: You have the right to remain silent, and the right to say nothing unless an attorney is present. Make sure you don't do anything suspicious. Do not give consent to a search unless the police have a probable cause. Most of all, stay calm.

Lastly, we learned more about the Juvenile Crime Initiative that might be passed in March of 2000. This initiative will take away rights from teens. Under this initiative, a youth can be tried as an adult and youths will be put into harsher adult prison environments instead Juvenile Hall. It will also require that "gang offenders" register with the local authorities (just like sex offenders). Please learn more about the Juvenile Crime Initiative and tell others that can vote to please vote against it. We may be young, but we also have the right to be respected. From this field trip, we learned how to respect one another and how to take care of ourselves when it comes to police brutality.



Valerie Bruce, Arlen Olivas and Annie Chan
at the ACLU conference

Listen Up as I Speak for My Community!

Keith Johnson
ISA Student

I want to improve where I live—the Alice Griffith Projects, otherwise known as Double Rock. I would like to remove all of the security and all of the main gates that block the main entrance and that surround our community. All the security does is cause problems. They come around in their security suits thinking that they are the real police by denying us of our rights. They make us move from where we are standing and they use foul language at us for no reason. The security guards tell the

real police that the youth are a big gang, just because we all know each other and like to be around each other. I don't see anything wrong with that because we all grew up together—we're like a big family.

The security expects us to stay inside when it is hot outside and they tell us to go in our houses when it gets late. They randomly choose who to let in and out of our community. They open the gates for outsiders that cause problems and they won't open the gates for people from the community.

Our community doesn't like the security because they harass us. We had a petition put out on them, but they didn't leave. We even wrote Willie Brown, but he's the real reason they are there (they told Willie that we had a lot of violence in our community). We don't want them in our community but we don't have anyone to help us go against them.

To tell you the truth, they need to take the money that they are paying for the security and put it to good use on something positive, like remodeling our homes. They need to put air-conditioning in the housing because we have a few senior citizens in our community and the heat outside at times could make them get heat stroke or sick. Our Boy's and Girl's club needs remodeling too! We need our basket ball court to be fixed up in addition to other things. For now, that's what we really need.



Graphic by:
Richard Cramer

**To find out more about this
publication or Our Schools,
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Gardening for AIDS Awareness

Pei Xuan Huang, Connie Lau,
Kenny Lei, Ho Yan Wong
ISA Students



Pei Huang gardens for a good cause

As part of the *Listen Up!* class we take on an *Social Action* project where we volunteer with a community project that interests us. Four of us volunteered one Saturday gardening in the AIDS Memorial Grove of the Golden Gate Park.

At the AIDS Memorial Grove, we not only worked weeding and planting, but the director took us on a walk around the grove. It was so beautiful there,

the trees were so high, you couldn't help but feel that you were very little in this world. On this tour, the director took us to see some thing that made us so excited! In the grove, there is a round circle on the ground, and on it are about a hundred names of people who support the fight against AIDS in United States. Some of these people are very famous. If you stand in the center of the circle facing a certain direction and say something out loud, you can hear an echo around you--it's amazing.

After doing different activities, we made a huge circle linked to each other by our hands. At that moment it was time for the participants to remember their friends or family that have AIDS.

Each of us had a very strong reaction to this activity. Here are some of our thoughts:

"At that moment it gave me a strong emotion about how people care about those with

AIDS, and how much people are suffering with this disease. This was a good time for us to think about the meaning of this activity. We did not come just to garden, it was an opportunity to care about the AIDS problem, and remind us that in this century, there have been a lot of people who are suffering from AIDS.

"This project made me remember my aunt who died of AIDS because she accidentally got it from a patient she treated in the hospital. In Chinese culture most believe that people with AIDS have committed a sin. I believe it is time for us to change our minds, and understand more about AIDS and HIV--not every AIDS patient has contracted the disease through sex. It's time to open our hearts and accept all of those with the virus and give them support."

--Ho Yan Wong

"People used this chance to show the outside world that we care about the people who have died of AIDS and who live with the disease as well. I think people hope that they can use this gardening activity to show

gratitude to these people. Even though we can't cure AIDS, we can show love and care towards these patients."

--Kenny Lei

"In my opinion, this activity was good for us to understand AIDS. I realized that we did not just come to garden, it was an opportunity to care about the AIDS problem in our lives, and to remind us that in this century, in this world, there are a lot of people who are suffering from AIDS and HIV."

--Pei Huang



Kenny Lei takes a break to smile for the camera

The Safe Schools Resolution: What it Means for Students and Parents

Derrlyn Tom
ISA Teacher

The school board passed the safe schools resolution last Spring. All parents should know what this means for their children.

1. Schools can only involve police in certain types of situations

The resolution states that schools can only call the police to address behavior in two types of situations. First, the school can involve the police when the school is required by law to call the police, which includes weap-

ons offenses, threats or attacks on school employees and assaults that cause very serious injury. Second, the school may call the police if involvement is necessary to protect the physical safety of students or staff.

Except in emergencies, only a school site administrator can call the police.

2. Schools must call parents when they call the police

The resolution requires that when a school does call the police to address student behavior the school must immediately contact the student's parents. This includes calling all numbers on the emergency card and all numbers provided by the student. Parents must be a given reasonable opportunity to come to school before their child is questioned.

If a parent cannot be present, the student must be given the option of having a school staff member of his or her choice present for the police questioning.

3. The school district must review and monitor the way in which police are involved at schools

All calls to the police must be reported in writing to the school administrator's supervisor at the School District. Those supervisors must monitor those reports and take action when a school is calling the police in inappropriate situations.

The school board must appoint a committee that will review reports regarding calls to the police and make a report to the school board.

The following organizations may be able to help you if you have questions about the resolution or problems regarding this issue:

Parent Advocates for youth
415-239-1061

Youth Making a Change
415-239-0161

La Raza Centro Legal, Youth Law Project 415-575-3500

Legal Services for Children
415-863-3762

Student Filmmakers Want Your Help!

We are three tenth grade students at ISA doing something great for the San Francisco, Hunters Point District. We are making a film on the issues going on right now in that community. This film is going to be filmed and edited by youth. If you want to learn more, if you want to be involved or if you want the film to be screened at a particular place, let us know. (We also need technical help to fix our analog editing equipment.) CALL (415) 695-5866 and ASK for MS. TOM.

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Book Review on *The Watcher*

Edvin Mejia
ISA Student

The book that I recommend is called "The Watcher". It is about a girl who gets into the TV by watching a soap opera. It is a pretty cool book but you should especially read if you are really into a particular TV show.

The book starts with a girl named Catherine who is watching a show called soap opera. There is a girl in this TV show called Cassandra.

What I like about the book is that Catherine thinks she is Cassandra because she is so hooked on the show. In one episode of the TV show the character of Cassandra has a birthday party where her dad gives her a sports car. Cassandra said that she wanted to drive it. She lived on a hill and when she went to drive the car, he could tell something was wrong. (What she didn't know was that her car's brakes were no good!) I can't tell you the whole story, so I will skip to the end.

In the end Catherine finds out that what's happening in the show is happening to her in real life. In the soap opera the killer who tried to kill Cassandra is caught. Catherine thinks that she might find out who is doing the same thing to her in real life. I won't tell you who the murderer is, but you can find out if you go to a library near you and look up the book.

The people that would most enjoy this book are people who are into mysteries, horror, and suspense stories. This was a great book, because it kept me in suspense in the middle of the story. I could really feel what was going on in the book. In the end, I made a small list to find out who tried to kill these girls. It was so cool to read the end and take part in solving the mystery.

Jobs are just the beginning!

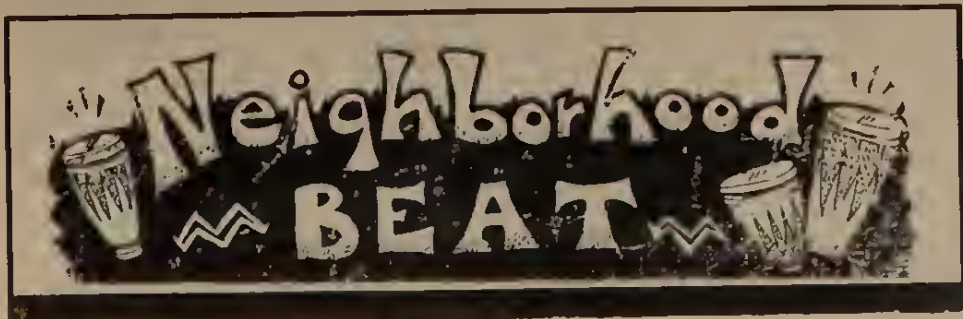
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Farewell, Chris



One of the people we will all miss in the coming year is Chris Christensen. Chris is retiring after 25 years with Walgreens, the last twelve at the cosmetics counter at the 16th and Mission store. Co-workers and regular customers are distraught that Chris, who was always willing to listen their troubles, is leaving. Chris had the gift for brightening each of the many lives she touched during the working day. Some of the clientele at 16th and Mission can sometimes be a little difficult to handle but Chris treated each person with respect and warmth. Many of them called her "mom" and went to her for advice. People like Chris make a tremendous difference in our lives simply by being kind.

Origins of the Civil Rights Act

On Thursday, January 13, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, Professor of Law David Oppenheimer of Golden Gate University will speak on "Dr. King's Legal Legacy, How Direct Action in Birmingham Led to the Introduction of

the 1964 Civil Rights Act." Free and open to the public, the address will be held at 12 noon in Auditorium C, Golden Gate University, at 536 Mission Street. It will trace the legal and social history of the most important civil rights law of the twentieth century.

Professor Oppenheimer has written extensively about the legal history of the civil rights movement, as well as current issues in civil rights law. He teaches at Golden Gate University and is visiting scholar at the University of California's Institute for the Study of Social Change. In addition he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights for the San Francisco Bay Area, The American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California, Equal Rights Advocates, and the Society of American Law Teachers.

The lecture is cosponsored by Golden Gate University School of Law and the Bar Association of San Francisco. It is generously funded by the Helzel Family Foundation. For more information, call Lori Ungaretti at (415) 442-6636.

Rhythm of Fine Arts

To see some visual aspects of the African American historical legacy, check out the work of self-taught artist Ronnie Goodman currently on display at Javalencia. Goodman will host a collaborative exhibition in memory of Dr. King that will run through February at Javalencia. There will be a reception for the artists January 15, 4pm. Javalencia Café, 920 Valencia St. (between 20th & 21st) Call 550-0444 for more information.

Docent Recruitment

If you have some extra time to spare, there's no better place to spend it than at the Mexican Museum. The Mexican Museum is seeking volunteers for their Docent Training Program. Volunteer docents guide museum visitors through a broad range of changing exhibitions in the

visual arts galleries located at Fort Mason Center.

The Mexican Museum is particularly interested in students, part-timers, and spirited, energetic retirees who have the weekdays available (most scheduled tours are on Thursdays, from 10am to 4pm). Exhibits change every four months, so an ability to be flexible and receptive to new information is extremely important.

A background in the arts is not mandatory, however volunteers must be responsible, reliable, and out-going. Docent volunteers must also have the capacity to communicate effectively with a group, demonstrate a sincere pleasure in working with the public, and be interested in acquiring knowledge in the arts and cultures of Mexico and the Americas. An ability to speak Spanish and foreign languages is highly desirable, although not required.

Immediate openings are available and the next Training Session begins January 21, 2000. Spring Training begins May 5, 2000. Interested individuals can obtain an application by calling (415) 202-9713. These are volunteer positions and do not offer a paid stipend, but do provide a great opportunity for professional and personal development.

The Mexican Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit responsible for raising all funds for its education and public programs.

The Mexican Museum is located at Fort Mason Center, Building D, at Laguna and Marina Blvd. Tel: (415) 441-0445. Fax: (415) 441-7683.



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The Mission's "Phantom Train"

Old railroad left its mark on the land and architecture of the area

By Ed Olmstead

For over 40 years (1864-1906) San Francisco's sole rail link, which connected it with San Jose, ran through the heart of the Mission District. Today one can still find many physical traces of this old rail line.

First built in 1864 as the "San Francisco and San Jose Railroad" (SF & SJ), this train approached the city from the south, via Colma, skirting Mount San Bruno's west side. In fact, the present day route of HWY 280 (from Daly City to Glen Park) exactly follows the old right of way of this rail line. The tracks ran along what is now San Jose Avenue, and diagonally from Dolores and Cesar Chavez, down to Harrison and 22nd streets. The route continued north on Harrison and

finally turned east, reaching the Townsend and 4th St. terminus.

This served as the line into San Francisco until the 1906 earthquake, at which time a tunnel was constructed allowing rail travel along the bayshore and east of Mount San Bruno.

It is not difficult to find evidence of the old train route in the neighborhood. There are many buildings that were constructed adjacent to its tracks and the unusual shape of these structures helps to show the course of the old rail line.

Heading north, the line entered the Mission, where present day San Jose Avenue runs through a gap, west of Bernal Heights. This is called the *Bernal Cut* and is a widened version of the original trench-like cut made for the railroad. The old route then followed the contours of the landscape, wending up almost to Church St. and then back to Cesar Chavez and Dolores Streets. Here it turned north east, at a 45 degree angle, running diagonally through a number of blocks.

Between Cesar Chavez and 26th Streets, one finds the *Samoan Presbyterian Church*, a very long slender building. This church is built on the old rail line, which accounts for its unusual shape.

A block further along, near 26th St. and Guerrero, a narrow park called Juri Commons, runs from southwest to northeast through the entire block. This is one of the most distinctive examples of the old train line leaving its mark on the neighborhood. Juri Commons is located on the old right of way, and virtually every house on either side of it is built at an odd angle,



Looking northeast from Valencia and 25th. Valencia Station was located in the lot next to this triangular building. The site is now occupied by Synergy School.



Locomotive comes through the Bernal Cut with Bernal Hill in the background.

conforming to the railroad property line.

Further along, at the northeast corner of Valencia and 25th Streets, one reaches the site of what was once the Valencia Street Train Station. Presently, this is the location of The Synergy School. But adjacent to this school, there is an extremely narrow triangular house. This house was originally built to fit onto a snug parcel of land between 25th St. and the train tracks.

Going further through the neighborhood, one continues to find more oddly shaped buildings. A good example is the Cala Foods Supermarket, located on South Van Ness near 24th Street. The front of the building looks perfectly normal, but the back of it narrows almost to a point, again conforming to the old right of way.

Upon reaching Harrison St. the tracks proceeded north, straight down the middle of the road. A photo taken in 1906 shows a long freight train being pulled by three large steam engines on a single track in the middle of unpaved Harrison Street. It is hard now to imagine a full length freight train coming down this road, yet it was just

a couple of years ago that the last train tracks were pulled up from Harrison. As this was the main rail line, it is easy to understand why there are warehouses and loading docks facing onto this stretch of road.

When the SF & SJ Railroad began operating in 1864 it was one of California's first inter-city rail links, and its \$2.50 fare to San Jose, completely undercut the \$32 fee being charged by stagecoach drivers on the same route. The railroad tycoons Stanford, Huntington, Crocker and Hopkins, known as the "Big Four", soon bought out the SF & SJ. This peninsula train line, thus served as the beginnings of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which would spread across California and much of the country.

Hunting Trips to the peninsula

One unusual piece of trivia related to these early days, is that the first ever, "hunting cars", later emulated on the western prairie, were actually run out of San Francisco! On weekends an enlarged caboose would carry up to fifty hunters and their dogs down the peninsula for a

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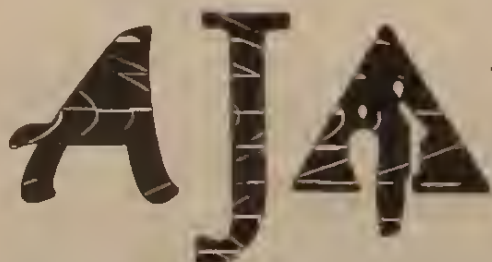
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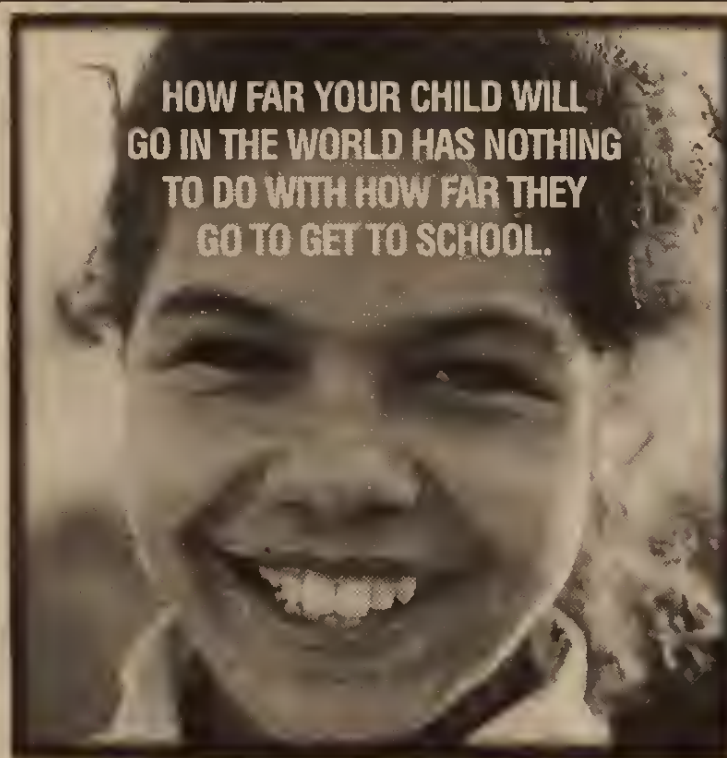
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Who: The San Francisco Unified School District is now enrolling students for the 2000-2001 school year.

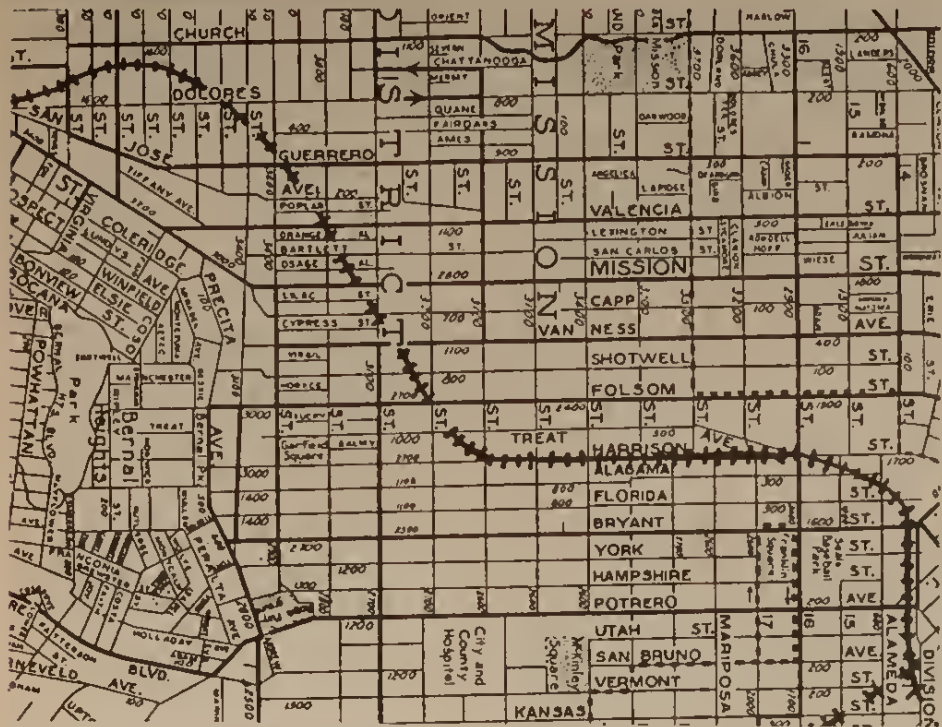
When: Application deadline is January 7, 2000.

Where: Any San Francisco Public School, or the Educational Placement Center at 555 Franklin St.

Questions? Call 415-241-6085 or visit us at www.sfusd.k12.ca.us

Did you know that schools with soaring test scores, language immersion programs, dedicated faculty and classes of no more than 20 students are right in your neighborhood? Which means going to great lengths for your child's education doesn't mean going great distances for it.

San Francisco Unified School District



The route of the Mission's former railroad line

day's shooting. This gives a clear indication of how unpopulated the peninsula back then.

At its beginning, the line to San Jose could hardly have been called a "commuter train." It made stops at such places as Leland Stanford's 10,000-acre "farm," as well as the mansion of William Ralston, founder of the Bank of California. (Ralston called his estate Belmont). There were no sizable towns or cities before one reached San Jose.

Funeral trains to Colma

In the late 1800's, after San Francisco had moved most of its cemeteries to Colma the Mission Rail Line served yet another purpose. Two or three car funeral trains ran out of the Valencia Street Station carrying the deceased and the bereaved to Colma. One car was specifically designed to the carry coffins. Until the advent of automobile travel, the Mission trains served as the main means of accessing the Colma ceme-

teries. According to Bill Welch, third generation owner of Duggan's Funeral Service, there were at one time, "two or three funeral homes on every block," around the Valencia St. Station. That gave them easy access to these trains.

THE 1906 EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE

As the 1906 fire burned virtually all of downtown San Francisco and spread half way across the Inner Mission, the Valencia St. Station became an important delivery point for Red Cross relief supplies. Emergency goods, arriving by rail, were unloaded at the station and then carted a half block up to the residence of Sunny Jim Rolph (the future mayor of San Francisco). This served as an important relief center for the many people who had lost their homes.

This episode would be one of the most noteworthy in the history of the Mission train line, but the same year also saw the



Looking southwest on San Jose Street at Juní Commons Park. Both the park and surrounding buildings were shaped by the railroad right of way.

train line, but the same year also saw the beginning of its demise. New tracks had been constructed running along the bayshore and east of Mount San Bruno. They replaced the Mission route as San Francisco's link with San Jose and the peninsula. The train tracks through the Mission became less used and eventually

were removed.

The sounds of train whistles and steam engines, as well as the dark clouds of smoke and soot from burning coal have long been absent from the neighborhood, but walking through the neighborhood today one can still find many physical reminders of the old Mission train line.

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A family in Mission history

The Duggan-Welch story goes back 115 years

by Victor Miller

“At one time there were two or three funeral parlors on every block of Valencia Street,” says Bill Welch proprietor of Duggan’s Funeral Service. He ought to know. For five generations the Hagan-Duggan-Welch family has con-

ducted funerals in the Mission District. There are few other local institutions that have been so enduring. Mission Dolores itself and the Columbia Park Boy’s and Girls Club (1906) are perhaps the only two. Of the numerous funeral homes along Valencia Street only Duggan’s remains. The proliferation of these establishments on Valencia was a direct result of the

Southern Pacific train station at 25th and Valencia (see *Mission’s Phantom Train* on page 14).

In the late 1800’s, San Francisco’s population grew larger and more land was needed for housing and business. City officials began restricting the number of burials within San Francisco and relegating them to Colma. In pre-automobile days proximity to the station became a definite asset for funeral directors, who could arrange for processions down Valencia Street to special funeral trains. Some rem-

nants of the industry are easy to spot such as Mission Chapel, now a plumbing supplies business on Valencia near 15th, others such as the Elbo Room and both New College buildings are not. The Suhr Mortuary survives in name only – Greg Suhr is the current captain of Mission Police Station, which is right across the street from Duggans.

James Hagan, tinsmith

The Duggan-Welch family tradition began with James Hagan, a native of Oldham, England. Hagan came to California as a common seaman but soon established himself as a tinsmith in Centerville. During the early 1880’s a series of influenza epidemics created a need for hand soldered zinc caskets. Successful in this trade, Hagan came to San Francisco and established himself sometime around 1885 as an undertaker.

An 1889 San Francisco City Directory lists a “Hagan and Schofield” (James and Joseph Hagan and George Schofield) as being undertakes and embalmers at 507 Valencia. In 1892 the Hagan Brothers Undertakers was listed at 525 Valencia, now Cafe Istanbul. Hagan moved two more times in the same area, first to 445 Valencia and in 1899 to 49 Duboce Street where he and his family also lived. Hagan had stables for the hearse-pulling horses and a carpentry shop for making caskets in the basement.

Hagan contracted with the city to bury the indigent and so he became San Francisco’s official undertaker. For a small fee his wife Sarah Letitia Hagan, an accomplished seamstress, sewed cloth coverings for the coffins.

The Hagan’s did well enough to send their youngest daughter Henrietta to medical school at the University of California, and to hire James Duggan as a general



Duggan’s today. Standing from left to right Josef Swinderski, Nigel La Qua, Bernard Venter and Vaughn Nixon; seated William Welch and Maria Gomez. Photo by Margaret Yamasaki.

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handyman. Duggan's primary responsibility was to care for the horses, a skill he'd developed as a calvaryman during the Spanish American War. The veteran had an eye for the boss's daughter and Duggan married Henricita just after she received her MD in 1903. This earned Hagan's wrath because Duggan was Irish, Catholic, and, worst of all, hired help.

William Duggan, union man
Duggan was told to seek employment elsewhere and for a time plied the horse and carriage taxi trade, eventually purchasing a limousine when the horseless carriage supplanted the horse. Duggan became active in union organizing circles and established many lasting ties with members of the

city's labor movement. He eventually became a charter member of the International Drivers' Union.

In 1916, after taking a course in embalming, he returned to the profession of his wife's family and purchased William Green Undertakers at 1230 Valencia Street (the building is now El Templo de la Fe Church). The Duggan's lived on the premises. While Hagan had been the undertaker of the indigent, Duggan through his long association with labor became the undertaker of the working class.

In 1929 Duggan's Funeral Service as it was now known moved to its present location at 17th and Albion Streets. Duggan acquired the building from Pacific Bell. The phone company had used the

facility to train operators in the use of the new fangled dial system. The usually solidly proletarian Duggan allowed himself a slight aristocratic indulgence doing up the central waiting room of his new facility with the trappings of an Irish castle as can be seen in the photo above.

The most dramatic event in Duggan's history, for that matter in San Francisco history occurred five years later during the 1934 General Strike. On July 5th union men Howard Sperry and Nick Bordoisc were shot and killed (murdered in the opinion of the strikers), by police in a day of violent confrontations known as "Bloody Thursday." Four days latter a contingent of 40,000 accompanied the bodies of the two men up Market Street and down Valencia to Duggan's for the memorial services. The police were nowhere in sight, traffic was directed by longshoremen.

Of the Duggan's five children William and Richard, following their mothers' profession, became doctors. Edwin, Letitia (later Letitia Welch) and Leonard continued to work in their fathers business. In 1959 Leonard left San Francisco and established Duggan's Mission Chapel in Sonoma, now run by his daughter Marilyn Caselli.

Unprophetic words

In 1963 Edwin Duggan, departed under less than amicable circumstances and opened the Duggan (as opposed to Duggan's®) Serra Mortuary in Daly City. As a parting shot Edwin told the family "This place will close down in six months without me." Bill Welch, Letitia's, son chuckled as he repeated Edwin's remark 36 years later. Last year Duggan's had 300 services, both cremations and traditional burials. They anticipate about 330 to 340 this year. This is nearly one a day, making them not only the most long lasting but one of the most successful Mission businesses.

Bill said Duggan's clientele have always been working class families but like other things in San Francisco, funeral expenses are getting beyond their reach. "When I first started working here thirty years ago, half the people who came to us were union members. We'd just call the union and ask what the death benefits were and price accordingly." But union death benefits haven't changed much since then and social security will no longer pay for funeral expenses. Still Duggan's prices have stayed lower than most, starting at \$2200. "Most people end up spending \$4000 to \$4500 as compared to \$7000 or \$8000 elsewhere," Bill said.

Duggan's remains a neighborhood enterprise and the clientele has changed ethnically for Irish and Italian to Latino, Chinese and a little bit of everything - the basic Mission demographic. A few things remain unchanged, William Hagan's tin boxes are still used 3 or 4 times a year for international shipping to countries where there will be no observance requiring a more formal casket.

Cremation has, surprisingly risen little in San Francisco in the last 30 years increasing from 24% to just 30% today. "San Francisco is a traditional city," Bill said by way of explanation. Well, perhaps on the subject of life's last ritual, but otherwise no.

In 1998 Bill and his son Steve further expanded the family business by taking over the College Chapel Mortuary on 29th and Dolores. Whether there will be a sixth generation to carry on the work remains to be seen. Steve's kids, James, 5 and Eillen, 7, have yet to express a career preference.

Duggan's Funeral Service is located at 3434 17th Street. Phone 431-4900.

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by vmiller

The Mission is home base for alternative culture and lifestyle in San Francisco so it's not surprising that it's also a neighborhood that abounds in alternative healthcare practitioners. The joint practice of acupuncturist Pat Mayo and chiropractor Doctor Susan Oyakawa that opened in September 1998, is one of the most recent examples.

The partnership is the result of three surreptitious events. An established chiropractic practice – some of our readers may remember the aging giant spine in front of the office on Valencia near 25th – was up for sale. Oyakawa was an associate in a downtown chiropractic center and looking to set out on her own. Mayo had just returned from a four-month stint in, Xiamen China where she had been the only American working in a Chinese hospital. She was also looking for an office. Mutual friends put the two of them together and things between them clicked. The idea of being able to walk to work was appealing to both women who live just five blocks from their office. There is also the added satisfaction of serving the surrounding community. "I like to see people from the neighborhood. That makes me very happy. Right now about 25% of our patients come from the Mission but I really want to improve on that," said Oyakawa.

Although both of them have general practices and see the gamut of ailments from asthma to arthritis, each of them has developed specialized skills within their respective fields. Oyakawa has a number of patients who are musicians with repeti-

tive stress injuries and says that is an area in which she'd like to concentrate. It's also something that hits close to home since Oyakawa is a guitarist with a local all woman band intriguingly called Chi Chi Palace. Mayo has for the past two years worked at the San Francisco Kaiser Chronic Pain Clinic and has built up good experience in pain management.

Both women said repetitive stress injuries, a product of a dotcom world, are becoming more and more common in both their practices. There are of course the usual and unusual job related physical traumas to deal with. One patient of Oyakawa's who is just 4'10" has the daunting task of closing doors on commercial jets. "Life is repetitive stress," Oyakawa quipped.

Oyakawa said, "I always knew I wanted to be involved in healing but I was sure I didn't want to be a medical doctor or a nurse." Surveying the options, she chose chiropractic. Mayo took a less direct route to acupuncture. Starting out as an occupational therapist, she moved into administrative work, serving for a time as the executive director of the Berkeley Holistic Health Center. "But after a while sitting behind a desk was beginning to affect my health," she said. A very positive personal experience with acupuncture and a long-standing interest in Eastern philosophy made for a logical and satisfying career transition.

Although the patient usually decides which therapy he or she prefers, there is a good deal of cross referral, so some patients wind up getting both chiropractic and acupuncture treatment. "Sometimes the two are more powerful together,"



Suan Oyakawa and Pat Mayo Photo by Margaret Yamasaki

Oyakawa noted. Herbal medicine also often plays a role in the therapy of each practitioner, each makes use of the Scarlet Sage Herb Company conveniently located just down the street.

The underlying principles of acupuncture and chiropractic, balance and alignment respectively, are remarkably similar. Mayo believes, "The whole idea behind acupuncture is to bring the body back into balance." This is not so different in outlook from Oyakawa's observation that

"Chiropractic is about aligning structure. We look at the structure of the spine so as to allow the nervous system to work at its full potential." Obviously these two healing arts and these two healers are a good match.

The offices of Pat Mayo and Susan Oyakawa are at 1364 Valencia. Pat Mayo can be contacted by phone at 970-1084, or by e-mail at . Susan Oyakawa can be reached by phone at 648-3327 and by fax at 648-3171.



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Library Lady



Dear Library Lady, I am going to do a report for school on the Mission District. I am supposed to write about the Mission neighborhood as though I am a journalist. My question is: are there resources at the library that pertain specifically to the Mission?

Thank you, Eugene

Eugene, it looks like you'll need some statistics as well as some descriptive historical material. The Mission branch has great resources for both.

LL Step #1: We have an excellent reference collection of articles and reports specifically on the Mission. The

December, 1994 issue of KQED's *San Francisco Focus* magazine is devoted to the story of the Mission. It includes interviews with people active in the life of the community. *San Francisco Neighborhoods Evolving Economic Activities*, published by the San Francisco Planning Department in 1998 includes a section on the Mission. *A Plan for the Inner Mission* published by the San Francisco Mission Housing Development Corporation in 1974 gives a history of the Mission dating back to the eighteenth century. These are just a few of the many resources that we have on the Mission.

LL Step #2: We have a brand new historical photo archive called Shades of



A policeman's funeral (1915) from the Shades of the Mission Project

the Mission, thanks to the generosity of donors who brought us their personal photographs last March. The photos were then copied for the archive and the donors went home that day with their collections.

The focus of the archive is the photos, but they do come with some documentation that will give you an even clearer idea of the Mission District and its history.

Eugene, what is so wonderful about this collection is that it is a great visual history of this ever-changing community that is like it's own town within a city. The archive's collection dates back to the turn of the century with photos from Irish-American families in front of their homes and picnicking in Dolores Park. One photo shows a family encampment in Dolores Park after the 1906 earthquake.

Later photographs show a Greek family picnicking on San Bruno Mountain, a Lutheran school photo from the early part of the century, and a French family during the 1920's. One former fireman brought photos of the house where he was born

back in 1916. It was the same house that his mother had been born in. Many school photos show the Mission's children through the years.

Although most photographs focus on life in the Mission, some were taken in other countries, other states, before families moved to the Mission. One photo shows a family driving back through Mexico during the 1950s for a visit to their native El Salvador. Photos show Italian bakeries, Latino arts organizations, Mission High School, and the Community Music Center over the years. Come check out the archive and tell your teacher about it, too!

Happy New Year!

Predictions for the millennium at the Mission Branch Library:

The End Of The World, St. Martins Press, 1999.

The Complete Prophecies Of Nostradamus, Crown, 1994.

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Health Matters



Richard Pitt

Resistance to GM food grows

In July 1998, I wrote an article for the *News*, which discussed the issues of genetically modified (GM) food. In the article I described the concern many people in Europe were having over this type of food in comparison with the USA.

Since then, things have begun to change. The major producers of genetically modified food now have to pay more attention to public opinion and politicians are now asking for greater accountability from the companies involved. Until recently the major companies were able to have things pretty much their own way. It is a good thing that these changes are occurring, but there are many questions that still need to be answered before we can be sure that GM food is safe. It may turn out that genetically modified food will lead to increases in productivity, diminish the need for pesticides, and allow us to feed an ever-increasing population. But, it could also turn out that by changing the genetic structure of certain plants it could lead to cross fertilization with non-genetically modified plants which could have a devastating effect on the ecology of plant life which has taken millions of years to evolve.

For many of us, our immediate emotional reaction to the tampering of genes in plants and animals is one of horror. However, America also has more implicit faith in Science and Medicine and the right to experiment with nature than many other countries. However, is it right to tamper with nature in this way? It brings up an important question that has been asked many times: how far should we go in controlling and affecting the processes of nature? From the building of huge dams, which change the environment of large areas of land, to the use of nuclear power which creates tons of waste radiation and cannot be effectively disposed of, to the use of toxic pesticides and herbicides in agriculture, what is the limit?

It is interesting that in Europe there has been more resistance to the use GM food. Not long ago in Ireland, protesters were demonstrating about this issue and stating that experimental fields of GM crops were far too close to other plants. They were actually tearing up the plants and when the police arrived, an officer went to stop them and in so doing he destroyed some of the plants by treading on them. When it was commented on that he was doing this, he continued to tread on them stating he couldn't be held responsible for what he was doing while performing his duty!

Not only do Americans have more faith in Science and Medicine – Americans consume more drugs than any other western nation - there is also a greater intolerance to the destruction of property, especially that of powerful corporations. In the US, the police often use violent methods to quell illegal demonstrations against private property. So they would probably respond aggressively to impromptu demonstrations like the ones in Europe.

What we are seeing is a struggle of many competing forces. The inevitable use of scientific technology that promises huge commercial gains for powerful companies versus the hope of scientific and economic advances that could help us win the challenge of feeding the world's population. Many people feel that nature's balance is being threatened as a result of personal and financial motives.

The important thing is to do more research to be very cautious. Mankind has made and is continuing to make enough mistakes with nature, which once done, cannot be undone. We cannot afford to make these mistakes.

Richard Pitt, Director of the Pacific Academy of Homeopathy and Health Educator, can be contacted at (415) 695-8200.

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31423 Digital Printing & Publishing	MW	6-9 P.M.	109B
34378 Digital Printing & Publishing	TTh	9 A.M.-12 NOON	109B
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40125 Business Graphics	M-F	9:30-10:30 A.M.	414
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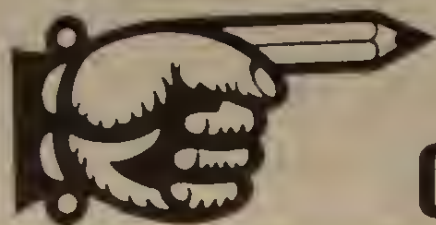
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Poems of the Month

edited by La Huerfana

The Whistler

When the whistler returns to the Agency,
Whistling his oddball homemade tune,
Down the last corridor
to the Control Room,
Then the walls do not shoot,
the floors fry,
Or squirt acid in your eye.

Finn the trapdoors hold
beneath his shoes,
The tigers do not leap
from the upper room,
The spiders grin and pop a shroom.

Then the wicked servant armchairs rise.
They leap to the chutes
to secret submarines.
The hands walk on the keys
The submarines do freeze
Gravity lightens,
all floats up in air,
Nor food eat
Nor strain
Nor care.

Messiah © 2000

16th & Valencia

I saw Jack Micheline
on the corner of 16th & Valencia
reciting Skinny Dynamite and
he was angry
and the next day he was dead
on the last BART train to Concord
and maybe that's why he was angry.

I met Harold Norse
shuffling around in a beaten world
his pockets filled with poems
only hipsters read
It's a cesspool out here he sighed
before retreating to the Albion Hotel
where angels honeycomb
the walls with dreams and
the rent is paid with angry poems.

I heard Oscar Zeta Acosta brown buffalo
footsteps pounding
the Valencia Corridor
shouting poetry at the sick junkies
nodding with their wasted whores
in the lobby of the Hotel Royan
the Mission's finest
and even the furniture was angry.

I felt the water rising from the deep and
the dead rising from their sleep
blowing on the conch shell of life.

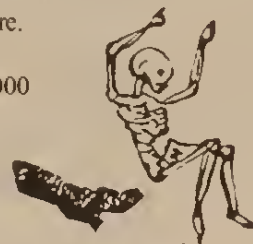
I blessed the maids the waitresses
the waiters the norteros trios
the blind guitar player the flower sellers
the homeless addicted prophet
the unclothed poetic visionary
strutting the sidewalks and
I knew it was the last call.

They were carving their niche
in the concrete
swearing to take back La Mission.
They were tired of dying for their own
chunk of nothing.
They would not be denied
the naked walls of hotel rooms
the blazing fire of morning
or the prismatic light of night.

They were marching fists raised and
voiced loud like lightening before thunder
and I joined with them in battle.
And we were a freight train
a careening bus crazy out of control
a battleship and every porthole filled
with anger.

And we were going to stay angry.
And we were not leaving.
Not ever leaving.
El corazón del corazón de La Misión.
El Camino Real ends here.

Alejandro Murguía © 2000



Entre Parentesis

Me siento en una mesa de café
Y véo pasar la gente
Por la calle de la discordia
(la dies y seis).

Las nubes de polmo derraman
Traslúcidos granos de plata fina
Y una rosa de filigrana
Baila con la ráfaga.

He visto esas caras (mortesinas)
Antes
Mas no recuerdo sus antecedentes.
Caras que se repiten
En esta blanca oscuridad
Hasta el infinito.

Max Perez © 2000

Between Parentheses

I sit at a café table
And watch people pass
In the disagreeable street
(the ten to six).

Lead clouds drip
Translucent grains of fine silver
And one intricate rose
Dances with a gust of wind.

I have seen these faces (fading lifeless)
Before
I could recall their histories.
Faces that replicate
In this blank obscurity
Infinitely.

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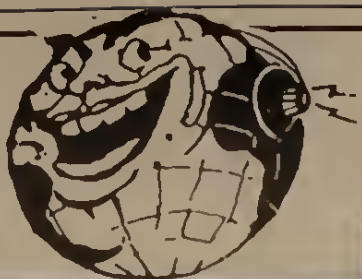
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Round World Music Review



Robert Leaver

DOS MIL

As we enter the new millennium one can't help but think historically, as in where have we been and where are we going? Musically, we stand at a very interesting moment in time. Access to music, or anything cultural, is greater than ever, the Internet assures us of an infinite number of possibilities in this regard.

The problem the enthusiast now faces is that there is so much music available in any and every genre that no one can possibly hear it all. The advent of the compact disc and digital recording technologies ensured that the sheer volume of recordings would increase exponentially. And now faced with an overwhelming amount of music the consumer must decide. Competition is fierce for space on the shelves of record stores, for radio play and cyber links. The media outlets are overloaded and publicity and marketing plays a more crucial role in reaching the consumer. For musicians and record companies the stakes are higher but the odds of hitting the jackpot are slimmer.

This change in the "market" has changed the industry of entertainment. When something becomes popular now a larger number of imitators appear and more quickly than before. Buena Vista Social Club (American guitarist Ry Cooder's presentation of classic Cuban

music played by aged veterans) sells a million and suddenly the market is flooded with multiple CDs by everyone who participated. Twenty other groups playing similar styles and thousands of releases from many different countries, repackaging music that had already been available, flood the market. Here now is a list of some Cuban CDs from 1999 that stand out:

Compay Segundo *Calle Salud*

Francisco Aguabella *Agua de Cuba*

Adalberto Alvarez *Jugando con Candela*

Afro-Cuban Jazz Project

Eliades Ochoa y Cuarteto Patria *Sublim Ilusion*

All music results from a combination of people, instruments, voice, rhythm, melody, and harmony. Most styles develop from mixing aspects of other pre-existing styles. The Cuban "son", as heard on the Buena Vista recording, developed early this century mixing African derived percussion with the Spanish and French derived music of polite society. Initially this mixture was seen by many as scandalous. Mambo became popular in the forties and fifties as American swing bands - which were originally influenced by Latin music, influenced Latin big bands.

The melody for "Twist and Shout" can be heard in old Cuban recordings



being played on flute. The "Bo Diddley" rhythm, long used in rock n' roll, is the same as the Cuban "clave" (3-2, or 2-3) which has been the rhythmic base of most Cuban music since the twenties.

Ska developed in Jamaica as musicians listened to American rhythm n' blues on the radio. They tried to copy it but added their own twist on the bass lines since the poor reception obscured that instrument. Rock Steady, the precursor to reggae then developed as they slowed down the tempo of ska and tried to imitate the vocal harmony groups of American soul. Jamaicans brought reggae with them to England and later groups like the Police or UB40 arose out of that influence. Jamaican DJs brought their sound systems to the Bronx where they MC'd over the records they played and African Americans picked up this technique and developed their own style of rapping over records.

Now, at the beginning of the new mil-

lennium, one can hear a diversity of sounds. Indian tablas in a "rave", Nigerian Afro-Beat sampled for a "house" cut. Traditional Indian ragas or film music in a reggae "dub" cut, and Congolese youth in Paris rapping in French with soukous guitar breaks. Clucanos from East LA playing guitar-based rock with soul influences, break beats with bossa nova, and soaring Arabic vocals and percussion over a reggae rhythm. Central American cumbia with a "house" beat, a Senegalese band playing salsa, or a Cuban salsa cut with a reggae dub intro and a ragga-rap break (Adalberto Alvarez' latest).

As cultures rub against each other and mix, and people throughout the world become more aware of other cultures, fascinating hybrids emerge. The musical landscape can be confusing with so many styles and sub-styles but one can also find common threads connecting across. Dizzy Gillespie said he imagined a day when all music comes together. I think that day has arrived.

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